Writing Unlocked: Submitting a Community Blog

Community Fifthpaw Feb 10, 2021

This blog was an Xbox Ambassadors community collaboration by Pandy Yato, CamicaziBoss, Jaydotremy and Oraclea

The Xbox Ambassadors Community Blog has been a part of our program for several years now- in fact, it's been a part of the program for longer than many of us! From its early days to now, it has given many Ambassadors not only a voice, but also a place to come together. The blog is a place to share ideas, opinions, and things we love with all of our fellow Ambassadors.

The blog is a less-visual, quieter part of the program where those who love to read and write have a platform. It's a seemingly-small part of our community that, nonetheless, is full of passionate people. The blog is constantly growing both in the number of contributors and in the extent of new ideas we see submitted.

All of those who have been published on the blog share a common passion in writing as well as a common goal: make the blog the best it can be, give all Ambassadors the chance to submit and be heard, and maintain an inclusive space for our fellow Ambassadors. This isn't just an Xbox blog – it belongs to the entire community and needs all of our ideas to be amazing!

Four people who have multiple pieces published on the blog decided to get together and chat about the blog, gathering our thoughts on four subjects that we feel are important to share with anyone who might want to submit

their own work for publishing. We also want to encourage everyone to read community-submitted blogs!

What first inspired you to write for the Xbox Ambassadors blog?

Jaydotremy: “Writing is something that I have legitimately enjoyed since grade school. In fact, the same can be said for my love and relationship with video games! Putting these two subjects together for me was a classic peanut butter and chocolate situation – I just never could find the right place to start.

The Xbox Ambassador Community Blog gave me a welcoming, safe, and fun space to share my writing and thoughts on a subject we all love so dearly. I would not still be writing about video games today without it.”

CamicaziBoss: “Like Jay, I’ve been writing since I was pretty young. I love telling stories. Unlike Jay, I didn’t get into gaming until later. I remember when the Amby team first announced community-submitted blogs, and I thought to myself, ‘I can write about games?’

My love of games and stories came together, and I needed to tell the story of one of my most memorable (and heartwarming) experiences during an Ambassadors playdate. I typed it up, proofread it a dozen times, and submitted it. At the time, I was still fairly new to the program and didn’t have high hopes, but the piece was well-received. My first blog post is one of my crowning achievements to this day! People still talk to me about it, and it’s been incredible to see how many hearts my writing reached.”

What are some of your favourite blogs?

Pandy Yato: “I love the blogs that show the amazing things people are doing with others in our community such ‘Why Are You So Nice?’ by CamicaziBoss. Kindness online really can have such a positive effect.

Online gaming can really be a lifeline for others, especially in the past year. ‘Gaming for Social Connected-ness‘ by MishManners is an excellent piece which illustrates how the digital world has helped us stay together when we have needed it the most.”

Oraclea: “Many of my favorite blog entries showcase aspects, experiences, and issues within the video gaming world that most of us may never encounter otherwise.

‘Finding Your Community, Remembering Your Dream (Job)’ by mushroomqueendom is a 2020 Black History Month blog that details the author’s experience of being a woman of color and finding a sense of community within the game development industry.

‘Education in Video Games’ by jaydotremy showcases how video games can be incorporated into a school setting to promote learning and develop problem-solving skills.

‘Disability in Gaming‘ by CerebralPaul discusses several challenges and breakthroughs in gaming accessibility that have affected the author personally and disabled gamers in general.

One thing I really like about these three entries in particular is that the authors all tie their experiences back to a sense of community – and ultimately, a sense of community is what drives the Xbox Ambassadors program. That same sense is why many of us are here writing or reading these blogs in the first place.”

Any advice for people considering writing for the blog?

Jaydotremy: “Simply put: go for it. The hardest part is getting started. Think about what in the Xbox community and ecosystem carries interest and meaning for you, and then start writing. Make sure to check the submission guidelines and have fun with it.

Don’t be afraid to share your writing with others for impressions and edits either. It’s a great way to encourage conversation on a topic we all immensely enjoy while learning and growing as a writer!”

CamicaziBoss: “Write about something you care about! If the writer doesn’t have passion for the subject, then the readers won’t be into it. Put your heart into your writing – after all, the worst thing that can happen is that it doesn’t get published.

Rejection can hurt, but it helps to remember: if your post isn’t published, it’s because it didn’t fit the current goals of the program, not because you are being rejected. Don’t take it personally, because everyone gets rejected from time to time. Accept any feedback, then try again!

What kind of blogs would we like to see in the future?

Oraclea: “I’d love to see blogs that show off the talents, experiences, and uniqueness of the members of our community. If you’ve ever encountered, attended, researched, or created something interesting, inspirational, or wholesome in the gaming world, and you feel comfortable sharing your story with others, the Xbox Ambassadors community blog could be a great platform for you.

I also think the blog can be a great platform to show off creativity beyond just text posts – for example, a couple web comics have been published in the past – and I’d love to see more submissions like these as well.”

Pandy Yato: “I would absolutely love to see more blogs about the things people are doing in our community and their passions. Are you a huge cosplayer? Do you love fundraising? Do you have a cat? There are so many amazing Ambassadors out there doing incredible things daily that we never hear about and I would love for the world to see how wonderful and kindhearted this community really is.”

Just as the Xbox Ambassadors blog brought the four of us together, it has done the same for so many other people through stories. It is a great platform for sharing knowledge and experiences, so together we want to encourage any Ambassador who is considering writing for the blog to take that leap.

It can be scary to put yourself out there like that; we have all felt that fear, too. If and when you do decide to write a piece, you will not be alone! You will be supported and cheered on by others (including all four of us). Ultimately thats what the blog is: a welcoming place to share your thoughts and maybe get some ink on your fingers.

If you are considering submitting to the blog, please find the link to submit your piece and the submission guidelines here!

If you are not considering a submission, that’s okay – stories are best when they have readers. Find community blog posts on the Xbox Ambassadors blog!